

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend paragraph [0024] as follows:

[0024] In an embodiment of separation joint 501, one side of explosive device 507 abuts main body 510. An opposing side of explosive device 507 abuts structure 502 such that explosive device 507 does not move during normal operation of separation joint 501. Notches 506 are formed in flanges 504 and 505 to create a weak point in separation joint 501 that will readily fracture when explosive device 507 is detonated. Notches 506 are placed in a location where flanges 504 and 505 adjoin main body 510. Notches 506 are also placed near explosive device ~~506~~ 507. It should be noted that separation joint 501 is made of a light weight but high strength material such as aluminum to rigidly couple a structure coupled to flange 503 to structure 502. Notches 506 do not compromise the requirement of separation joint 501 to withstand torsional, compressive, and tensile forces under normal operating conditions.

On page 18, please amend the text of the Abstract as follows:

Methods and apparatus are provided for a low shock separation joint. The separation joint comprises a male member, a female member, and an explosive device. At least one projection is formed on the male and female members. Surfaces of the at least one projection on the male and female members are mated to one another to prevent separation under compressive and tensile forces. The explosive device is placed within a cavity of ~~said~~ the female member. A method for reducing shock in a separation joint is provided. An explosive device in the female member of the separation joint is detonated. A volume increase of the explosive device bends flanges of the female member away from one another. Surfaces in intimate contact with one another are moved out of contact with one another to decouple the male member from the female member.